

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A computer-implemented method of generating an information
2 disclosure statement comprising:

3 (a) receiving a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic
4 document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a patent
5 office, the reference information including IDS information; and
6 (b) associating the IDS information with an electronic information disclosure
7 statement.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing the IDS
2 information in the electronic information disclosure statement.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing a plurality
2 of pointers in the electronic information disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer
3 corresponds to an electronic document.

1 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
2 receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to
3 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;
4 extracting the IDS information from each electronic document corresponding
5 to the plurality of pointers; and
6 transmitting the IDS information from each electronic document
7 corresponding to the plurality of pointers to the patent office.

1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising extracting IDS information
2 from the reference information.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the IDS information is extracted from
2 the reference information automatically in response to the signal.

1 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a prompt to the
2 user for generating the signal.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a field in a
2 mouse pop-up window.

1 9. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises an electronic
2 button.

1 10. The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a computer
2 screen icon.

1 11. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is downloaded
2 from a database coupled to a computer network.

1 12. The method of claim 1 further comprising saving the electronic
2 information disclosure statement in a database.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a local database
2 coupled to a local computer network.

1 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a remote database
2 coupled to the internet.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing access to the
2 electronic information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.

1 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising prompting the user for an
2 access code when the user requests access to the electronic information disclosure statement,
3 wherein when the correct code is provided by the user, the user may access the electronic
4 information disclosure statement, and when the correct code is not provided by the user, the
5 user may not access the electronic information disclosure statement.

1 17. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user with
2 instructions on when an electronic document is to be disclosed to a patent office.

1 18. The method of claim 1 further comprising electronically transmitting
2 the electronic information disclosure statement to a patent office.

1 19. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2 receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to
3 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;
4 and

5 electronically transmitting the electronic information disclosure statement to
6 the patent office contemporaneously with the patent application.

1 20. The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically generating a
2 letter to third party in a foreign country when the electronic information disclosure statement
3 is filed in a patent office, the letter including a portion of the IDS information in the
4 electronic information disclosure statement.

1 21. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an
2 electronic version of a United States Patent.

1 22. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an
2 electronic version of a foreign patent document.

1 23. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an
2 electronic version of a publication.

1 24. A computer system comprising:
2 (a) a computer processor;
3 (b) a computer-readable memory, coupled to said computer processor, said
4 computer-readable memory including computer instructions to:
5 (i) receive a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic
6 document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a
7 patent office, the reference information including IDS information;
8 and
9 (ii) associate the IDS information with an electronic information
10 disclosure statement.

1 25. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to
2 associate includes instructions to store the IDS information in the electronic information
3 disclosure statement.

1 26. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to
2 associate includes instructions to store a plurality of pointers in the electronic information
3 disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer corresponds to an electronic document.

1 27. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to extract the IDS information from the
3 reference information.

1 28. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted automatically with one mouse-click.

1 29. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted automatically by parsing the reference information.

1 30. The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is
2 extracted using a pop-up menu system.

1 31. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide a prompt to the user for generating
3 the signal.

1 32. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to save the electronic information disclosure
3 statement in a database.

1 33. The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide access to the electronic
3 information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.